

Come follow Christ



DIOCESE OF  
LICHFIELD

in the footsteps of St Chad



Curacy in the Diocese  
of Lichfield

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Title post in the  
Parish of  
St James the Great,  
Clayton



A mixed urban setting

liberal catholic



# Welcome to Lichfield Diocese

Cradled at the intersection of the Midlands and the North, and the interface between England and Wales, the Diocese of Lichfield is the ancient centre of Christianity in what was the Kingdom of Mercia.

We are rightfully grateful for the inheritance we have from St Chad that leads us to focus on Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism as we live and serve among the communities of Staffordshire, northern Shropshire and the Black Country.

Wherever in the Diocese you may be placed, you will benefit from being part of a wider family, mixing with people serving in a wide variety of contexts – from the grittiest inner-city neighbourhoods of Stoke and the Black Country, to the leafiest rural parishes of Staffordshire and Shropshire, to the sparsest upland communities of the Staffordshire

Moorlands and Welsh Borders.

And we embrace the widest spectrum of church traditions – evangelical and catholic, liberal and conservative, choral and charismatic, as we journey together – as a colleague recently put it, it is our goal to be a ‘spacious and gracious diocese’.

**‘...a spacious and gracious diocese**

It is my determination and that of my episcopal colleagues that your calling to a title post will be a time of encouragement, ongoing formation, challenge and (while rarely unbridled) joy. Our colleagues among the diocesan staff keenly bring their various specialisms both spiritual and practical to serve our parishes, fresh expressions, schools and chaplaincies.

*+Michael Lich:*  
**+ Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave**  
Bishop of Lichfield

**As we follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad, we pray that the two million people in our diocese encounter a Church that is confident in the gospel, knows and loves its communities, and is excited to find God already at work in the world. We pray for a church that reflects the richness and variety of those communities. We pray for a Church that partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as a people of hope.**  
(Diocesan Vision Statement)

## A caring diocese

Lichfield Diocese is one of the largest in the country, covering an area of 1744 square miles and serving a population of more than 2 million.

The diocese consists of three episcopal areas with three Area Bishops (of Wolverhampton, Stafford and Shrewsbury) ministering alongside the Diocesan Bishop, each overseeing a different geographic area. This indicates the diocese’s commitment to its different contexts, and to the pastoral care of our clergy.

## Homes and schools

We aim to provide high quality housing for our clergy with a continuous programme of improvements to houses and responsive, specialist contractors for emergencies.

As well as the 208 Church of England schools in the Diocese, there are many good schools and colleges that will welcome clergy’ children, and a

number of higher education centres can be found in Stoke, Keele, Stafford, Shrewsbury, Telford, Wolverhampton and Walsall.

## Vocation and mission of all

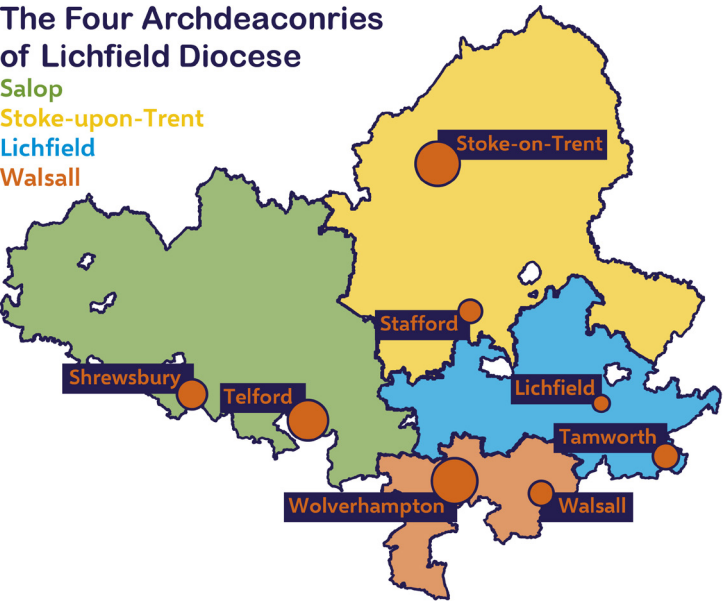
Our vision for the diocese is that all people, lay and ordained alike, will grow ever more deeply into their vocation as disciples of Christ. We hope to become a Church where all our members are equipped to know they are called by God to worship and to be the eyes, hands, feet and mouth of Christ in their own contexts.

To further these aims, and to develop creative patterns of ministry, we ask all training parishes to offer ‘sixth-day’ opportunities for curates – which might be a chaplaincy attachment (school, hospital, prison or hospice), involvement with local gardening ventures, night-shelter involvement – to mention just a few possibilities.



“Our time as a family in my curacy in rural Shropshire has been one of the best of our lives. I’ve learned that the priestly role is vital in the community. I’m particularly enjoying working with seniors, and enabling the giftings of others which resulted in a successful Messy Church starting in one of the villages. I give thanks to God for this special time, and for everyone who’s been there for me and supported me throughout.”

Revd Jassica Castillo-Burley





# Everything but the sea



David Rayner (Wikipedia) / Stoke-on-Trent Bottle Kiln / CC BY-SA 2.0BY-SA 4.0

Staffordshire prides itself on being ‘the Creative County’: Shropshire is the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution and the Black Country is renowned for its industry and all have significant opportunities for spouses who wish to develop careers in any sphere.

For those days off when you need space away from the parish, the area has everything you could wish for – except the sea: wild landscapes, cultured museums and stately homes. Sports of many kinds (including Premiership football) and at least two theme parks

Shrewsbury Flax Mill – the prototype skyscraper / Tk420 (Wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 4.0



Opening of the Lighthouse Project at Kingsland CE Academy, Bucknall



## Road and rail links



For those with family and friends in other parts of the country, the Diocese has great transport links: the M6/M6Toll bisects the centre of the Diocese north-south, and the M5 originates at our southern tip. Heading west, the A5/M54 give easy access to north and mid Wales, while the A50, A5 and M6Toll give swift access to the M1, M42 and A38 for the East Midlands and the south-east.

Rail links are also good with all major towns having direct services to London and Birmingham and four major airports surround our borders – Birmingham, East Midlands, Manchester and Liverpool.



Dovedale (location of one of the Diocese’s two residential retreat centres) / Shaun Dunmall (wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 2.0 4.0

## Leisure and pleasure

Lichfield Diocese has everything but the sea. For walkers and climbers, there’s an extensive network of canals, Cannock Chase, The Roaches, and the Shropshire—Welsh borders (for example). If you’re into more organised fun, Alton Towers and Drayton Manor Theme Park

Wightwick Manor nr Wolverhampton / Tony Hisgett (Wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 4.0



can provide it. And then there’s many museums including Walsall’s New Art Gallery and the RAF museum at Cosford; not to mention excellent sporting options for both watching and participating – from premiership football to the Tamworth Snowdome. Along with Wedgwood, theatres and cinemas, restaurants and superb tea shops just begging to be discovered...



Apedale Valley Light Railway near Stoke with the adjacent country park and Heritage Centre is one of many transport and leisure museums in the Diocese / Simon Jones

If shopping is your thing, there is a range of options, from the chic boutiques at Barton Marina, and Shrewsbury to large malls in or near the urban centres. We’re fortunate in being the home of many fine ales and beers brewed in Burton on Trent (the museum is well worth a visit), and Staffordshire oatcakes are a unique local delicacy to be discovered.



Wulfrun Centre in Wolverhampton is one of many shopping destinations in the region © Roger Kidd -/ geograph.org.uk/p/1171894/ CC BY 2.0

Alton Towers near Uttoxeter / Jeremy Thompson/Flickr / CC BY 2.0





# The Benefice of St James the Great, Clayton

Welcome to the profile for St James the Great, Clayton! Our mission statement is ‘Making known in word and deed the love of God in Christ.’ In the profile which follows, we hope that you will find ministry, mission, and pastoral care, which reflect our striving to live out our mission statement in our parish setting.

## Services in the churches:

St James’ is an accessible, open, and inclusive church. Worship is rooted in a liberal Catholic tradition and celebrates the riches of the liturgical year. We have a family Eucharist at 10am on Sunday morning and online worship at 3pm on Sunday afternoon, which reaches those who are housebound or unable to attend during the morning. We are looking to develop music in our worship.

We have a mid-week Eucharist at 10am on Wednesday morning, ahead of the Wednesday morning drop-in, Place of Welcome. We have a Messy Church, Jimmy’s Ark, for young children and their families which meets one Sunday a month either during the morning Eucharist or as a separate session at 3pm with either seasonal or topical themes. We are looking to develop worship and activities with young people. We are invited to conduct a range of occasional offices for church members and local people.

In 2022 we conducted 16 funerals, 7 baptisms, and no weddings, although in 2021 we conducted 2 weddings. So far in 2023 (August) we have conducted 9 funerals, 2 burials of ashes, 4 baptisms, one confirmation and baptism, and one wedding. Baptisms are held either during the 10am Eucharist or as a separate service at 12 noon. Funerals are held



either in church or at a local Crematorium with burial in a local cemetery or in the Garden of Remembrance (area for the burial of cremated remains) at St James’. Weddings are joyful occasions when we work with couples to give thanks for the love that has brought them to the point of marriage and to mark the commitment that they are making.

1st	10.00 Sung Eucharist 15.00 Jimmy’s Ark
2nd	10.00 Sung Eucharist
3rd	10.00 Family Eucharist
4th	10.00 Sung Eucharist
5th	10.00 Sung Eucharist

## Buildings / Community

The faith community that forms St James’ church literally began life in a cowshed on what is now the car park to the church and church hall. The church and church hall stand on what was the site of Holly Farm. Founder members raised the money to build the current church, which was consecrated on 29 April 1966, and church hall, which was opened in 1972. There is a distinctive sculpture of the risen Christ at the east end of the church.

Roman Catholic and Methodist friends built St Werburgh’s and St Luke’s respectively at a similar time. The building of St James’, St Werburgh’s, and St Luke’s, took place in response to the growth of the local community, particularly in the years following the Second World War. Newcastle Baptist Church has moved into to a former URC church within the parish, but doesn’t participate in ecumenical links and activities.





# The Benefice of St James the Great, Clayton

## Your Training Incumbent

### Revd Dr Julia Babb

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- **Trained:** Cranmer Hall, Durham
- **Ordained:** 2000, Manchester
- **Curacy:** Langley (All Saints and Martyrs) and Parkfield (Manchester Diocese)
- **Vicar since** 2018

Julia Babb is the Vicar of St James' (.72) and chaplain to Harplands Hospital (.28) in a dual post. Alongside her dual post, Julia serves as a mid-term assessor and vocation advisor for the Diocese of Lichfield. Julia has been ordained since 2000. Since ordination, she has served in a range of parochial and chaplaincy settings, and also as a diocesan officer (Training Officer IME 4-7 and CMD for the diocese of Manchester 2012-2018). Julia has a strong academic and professional commitment to practical theology, spirituality, and mental health.

Outside of ministry, she takes a keen interest in current affairs, enjoys a wide range of reading and music, loves to get out into the countryside or to the coast, and cherishes time with her husband (Revd Canon Geoff Babb) and their family. Julia has recently (March 2023) begun to learn to play the piano again after a gap of almost forty years and is greatly enjoying the musical adventure!



## Context



The parish of Clayton is comprised of Clayton, Northwood Lane and Westbury Park and has a population of roughly 9500 people. There is no one centre to the community and the church is located on the busy A519 trunk road, between Junction 15 of the M6 and Newcastle under Lyme town centre. The proximity of Junction 15 means that on occasion county lines are an issue in the local area.

The parish is mixed socio-economically and includes owner occupier housing, private rented housing, social housing, a small amount of sheltered housing, people on fixed pensions, working families, single person households, and more wealthy professionals. The parish is becoming more mixed ethnically, especially in the Westbury Park area. The Newcastle under Lyme Islamic Centre is currently being developed in a former Methodist church in the neighbouring parish of Westlands.

There is one state secondary school within the parish, Clayton Hall Academy, with which St James' has good links, not least through seasonal service for years 7, 8 and 9, and the

### The Congregations in numbers:

Figures from 2022	
Electoral Roll	73
Average Sunday Attendance Adults	31
Average Sunday Attendance Children	2
Baptisms	7
Marriages	0
Funerals in church	9
Funerals in crem	4
Committals	4



# The Benefice of St James the Great, Clayton

Vicar's role as school governor. There is one Roman Catholic Primary School within the parish. The closest state primary schools are situated within the parishes of Westlands and Newcastle.

There is quite a lot of isolation, particularly among older people, to which we seek to respond through the Wednesday morning drop in, Place of Welcome. We collect food and raise money for Newcastle Foodbank right through the year. We partner with North Staffordshire Carers in relation to a twice-monthly group for dementia sufferers and their carers. We host in the church hall a range of activities that support wellbeing in the local community week-by-week, including yoga, pilates, and Whispers of Hope.



"We're really grateful for all the support we got from the Diocese, starting with the DDO, who went out of her way to help in finding a good match, and to work out practical matters.

"My vicar has been very supportive, through planning carefully together and weekly supervisions, where we reflect on different areas of ministry. I have been given new challenges progressively, all done sensitively and fitted to the stage I was at. Our churches have been so welcoming to the whole family, and very supportive of my ministry, even when this involves less regular ideas, like planting a tree during a sermon (only in a pot, I regret to say!)."

Revd John Beswick Pallister



## The ministry

St James' has served as a training parish since its inception. One former curate recently celebrated the fortieth anniversary of his priesting in the church and another former curate has returned to worship in the church in his nineties!

St James', like many other churches, faces challenges in relation to finance and an ageing congregation. It also has opportunities to which it is seeking to respond with faith and realism in terms of vocation, volunteers, and resources. These challenges and opportunities together mean that making and managing change is a key task that the Vicar, churchwardens, PCC, and congregation, are facing and are at different stages of working on and responding to.

Ministry at St James' aims, in John Hall's phrase, to be mission shaped rather than church shaped, from worship to pastoral care and outreach. Members of the congregation are welcoming, and visitors often remark on the strong sense of prayer that they feel in our worship and the warmth and openness that they experience over Sunday morning refreshments and through our wider fellowship.

As we make and manage change at St James', vicar, churchwardens, and PCC are very aware that developing lay ministry and faith nurture across the generations are vital tasks. We are also aware that these tasks need to be approached in light of the changes that have taken place, and continue to take place, in society, all of which have implications for what faith, fellowship, and belonging to church, mean and can mean, to people in our community today.

Together, we are building good connections across the communities that constitute the parish as an essential foundation for developing lay ministry and faith nurture across the generations. We are seeking to build these connections through the occasional offices, work with Clayton Hall Academy, Place of Welcome, and the use of the church hall. The Keele Bach Choir rehearses in our church



and church hall, and this has led to a creative partnership which we are developing.

Historically St James has had licensed lay readers. This historical ministry offers some positive experience of lay ministry on which to build as lay ministry is developed in changed, and changing, circumstances.

A curacy at St James will offer experience in the areas described above as well as the opportunity to work with us in the development of ministry and mission described above. It would also offer the opportunity to gain experience in hospital chaplaincy in a mental health setting.

# The Benefice of St James the Great, Clayton

Harplands Hospital offers adult in-patient services for North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Services (NSCHT) whilst the Darwin Centre offers CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) in-patient services. NSCHT also offers a range of out-patient and community services. It serves Stoke on Trent, Newcastle under Lyme, and North Staffordshire, taking in Staffordshire Moorlands. Adult services include acute and intensive psychiatric care, neurological and old age psychiatry (NOAP), learning disability and substance misuse. CAMHS services include paediatric psychology, autism, eating disorders, and youth offending.

Chaplaincy with NSCHT is focused on the spiritual care of patients and staff of all faiths and no faith. It includes Christian worship for in-patients at Harplands Hospital each Tuesday morning and spiritual and pastoral care week by week. Chaplaincy sits within the patient experience directorate. As chaplain, Julia is line-managed by the patient experience coordinator and works closely with the activity workers across the adult acute and NOAP wards. She is liaising with colleagues from the well-being hub with regard to staff well-being and is a member of the lived experience practice provider collaborative for eating disorders in the West Midlands. She has drawn on her doctoral research to contribute to CPD (Continuing

Professional Development) seminars, which are part of NSCHT’s work in partnership with Keele University, around themes of spirituality, suicide prevention and eating disorders.

Curacy experience with NSCHT could take the form of weekly ministry across the curacy or ministry for a defined time at an agreed stage in the curacy.

# Housing and Accommodation

The Diocese of Lichfield either has a curate’s house in the benefice or a ‘strategic’ house for curates in close proximity of the benefice. These are good houses, mainly with three to four bedrooms. If there is no curate’s house in the benefice and where such a strategic property exists within easy reach of the proposed training parish this will be the preferred curate’s house. If there is no strategic housing available nearby the diocese is committed to providing appropriate accommodation for all those entering ministry. We generally do not offer rented accommodation except as an emergency short term measure. Our curates can be confident that their home will be of a consistently high standard. If you wish to know further details about the house, the BDO will be able to provide you with more information.



# Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

## Supporting learning and formation

Curate learning, formation and development is strongly valued and affirmed in Lichfield Diocese. Curates receive ongoing supervision and reflection on ministry in the parish, complemented by our curate-training programme in which you share with your year-group of peers. The aim of the training programme is to enable each person to flourish in their ministry and inhabit more deeply their vocation as deacons and priests. This programme supports learning and formation through a partnership between the Diocese and The Queen's Foundation. And it takes place in the context of parish supervision and reflection on ministry.

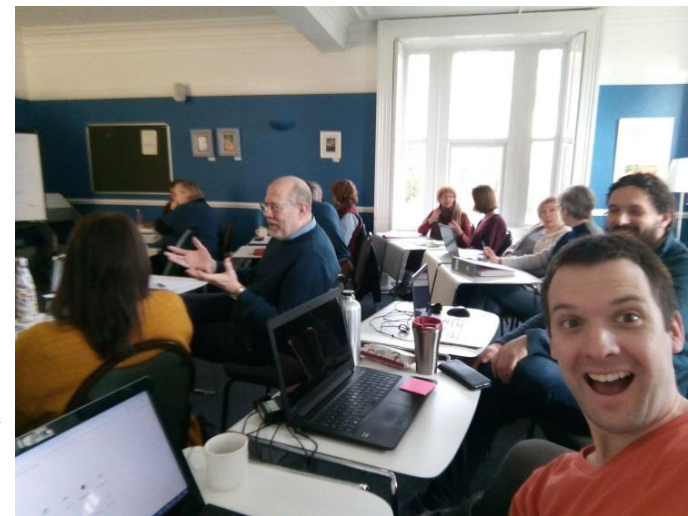
The programme provides space and an environment beyond the parish context in which curates come together with skilled tutors to learn with and from each other's shared experience, so that they can better integrate their practice and reflection, develop their personal qualities, spiritual, ministerial and professional gifts and skills, and deepen their desire to learn.

The curacy experience is very much a collective one, often gathering at Lichfield Diocese's centrally-located Shallowford House for study, prayer, retreat and de-stressing with peers (pandemic permitting): as such, it's a much less scary venue during IME2 than as a base for a BAP!

## Pattern of training

The programme focuses on grounded and situated learning and prioritises the Diocese's focus on Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism:

- In Year 1 establishing you in your new ministerial context and practice, and supporting your preparation for ordination as priest.
- In Year 2, deepening your practice and understanding of mission and ministry with the theological tools and skills you need to contextualise this.
- In Year 3 helping you prepare for life-long ministry and to take up a post of responsibility to be entered into with skill and confidence.



# IME2 to equip for ministry

At the heart of the programme are residential events which bring together a year-group of curates. They reflect the diversity of the Church, while the different ministry contexts reflect the diversity of the Diocese. This cohort is the primary context for the essential learning and formation to develop your ministries, focusing on ministerial formation, and on the development of relationships which enable mutual flourishing for all.

## Opportunities for academic awards

Alongside the IME2 training you may wish to continue studying on an accredited pathway with Common Awards. Curates who already have a Diploma award from IME1 may register for a BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission. Others who already have a degree or higher award or are recognised as potential theological educators have opportunities to further their studies alongside their curate programme.

"We have had amazing support from the diocese over the 6 years through both of our curacies and that's not always been straightforward- particularly when 'life' sometimes gets in the way!

"But the support, through thick and thin has been fantastic, particularly discerning Adam's call to pioneering ministry and curacy under 'pioneer' supervision."

Revds Adam & Charlotte Gompertz



## Care for curates and families

The wellbeing of clergy and their families is very important to us. In addition to the supervisory aspects to curacy, we have a free, confidential counselling service (the Listening Ear scheme) for all clergy, diocesan staff and their families.

## More info

– contact the BDO (details on back cover) or visit [lichfield.anglican.org/curacy](https://lichfield.anglican.org/curacy)





# Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

## For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

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## The Benefice of St James the Great, Clayton.

Making known  
in word and deed  
the love of God in Christ.

